

CASE STUDY

Jamie Collins

Plumbing Apprenticeship (Levels 2 and 3)

Plumbing apprentice award winner Jamie Collins grew up seeing his dad and brother working in the construction and building industry. So perhaps it comes as no surprise that a career in the building trades was a natural choice for him.

Having worked as a builder for a number of years, Jamie decided to specialise in the plumbing trade. He knew that learning new skills and gaining qualifications would be key to work his way up into the industry.

Jamie chose an apprenticeship because he wanted to learn more skills and earn a wage at the same time. He enrolled on the Level 2 Plumbing apprenticeship delivered by Activate Enterprise at City of Oxford College, part of Activate Learning, in 2011, which he followed up with an apprenticeship at Level 3, completed in Spring 2015.

He found a placement through his personal network, allowing him to gain experience and skills as part of his apprenticeship: **“I had been working in the construction industry and wanted to specialise in a trade. One of my friends had his own plumbing and heating business. He offered me a placement while I trained in the industry.”**

Jamie’s apprenticeship in domestic plumbing gave him the opportunity to learn essential work skills and gain more industry experience: **“It was very practical, varied and hands on. I learnt about heating systems, plumbing in the bathroom. I also learnt about other things such as Maths, communication skills and planning. I got much better at planning my tasks and keeping customers updated.”**

In recognition of his talent and dedication, Jamie was nominated by Activate Enterprise for the Freeman of Oxford Awards: **“When I was nominated for the Freeman Award, my**

assessor Bob said my folder of evidence collected on site was one of the best ones he had seen. That was a big boost for my self-confidence.”

Jamie’s apprenticeship eventually led to a paid job in his friend’s company. He is now considering his future career. Jamie plans to specialise in gas installation, gaining the Corgi gas certification to be allowed to install gas safely, as well as completing the Solo thermal energy efficiency qualification.

“Doing the apprenticeship has opened doors for me. Earning money while you learn was ideal. I’ve always tried to make myself useful; for example, I can drive so would drive the spare van. And I was happy to learn new things.”

“It builds your confidence up when bosses notice a job well done and let you go and do jobs on your own. It’s a case of learning, start at the bottom and once you’re learning, you can work your way up.”



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